



## Are we adapting to climate change?

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### Abstract:

Human systems will have to adapt to climate change. Understanding of the magnitude of the adaptation challenge at a global scale, however, is incomplete, constrained by a limited understanding of if and how adaptation is taking place. Here we develop and apply a methodology to track and characterize adaptation action; we apply these methods to the peer-reviewed, English-language literature. Our results challenge a number of common assumptions about adaptation while supporting others: (1) Considerable research on adaptation has been conducted yet the majority of studies report on vulnerability assessments and natural systems (or intentions to act), not adaptation actions. (2) Climate change is rarely the sole or primary motivator for adaptation action. (3) Extreme events are important adaptation stimuli across regions. (4) Proactive adaptation is the most commonly reported adaptive response, particularly in developed nations. (5) Adaptation action is more frequently reported in developed nations, with middle income countries underrepresented and low-income regions dominated by reports from a small number of countries. (6) There is limited reporting on adaptations being developed to take advantage of climate change or focusing on women, elderly, or children.

**Source:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2010.09.012>

### Resource Description

#### Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker, Researcher

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

#### Geographic Feature:

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

## **Geographic Location:**

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

## **Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

## **Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

## **Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## **Resource Type:**

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

## **Resilience:**

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

## **Timescale:**

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

## **Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:**

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content